

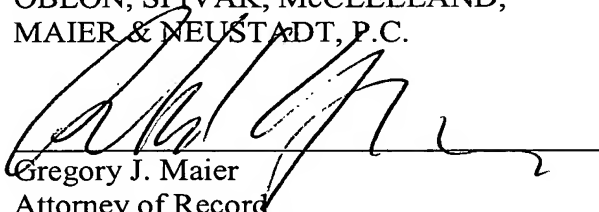
If the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions.

In the present application, Claims 4, 5, 7, 24-28 and 36-38 are directed to methods for forming a metal film while Claims 11-13, 20 and 33-35 are directed to apparatus for the formation of a metal film. Hence, it appears that these claims according to the present invention are part of an overlapping search area and that a search for Claims 11-13, 20 and 33-35 would necessarily include a search directed to Claims 4, 5, 7, 24-28 and 36-38 as well. It is therefore believed that there is no undue burden on the Examiner to search all the claims under MPEP §803, and Applicants respectfully traverse the Restriction Requirement on the grounds that a search and examination of the entire application would not place a *serious* burden on the Examiner.

Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the requirement to elect a single group be withdrawn, and that a full examination on the merits of Claims 4, 5, 7, 11-13, 20, 24-28 and 33-38 be conducted.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



Gregory J. Maier
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 25,599

Customer Number

22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 06/04)

GJM/AY:mda
I:\ATTY\AKY\24S\243863DIV\REST.DOC

Akihiro Yamazaki
Registration No. 46,155